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& GREEK STUDIES ABROAD

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Report on the Teaching of the Holocaust in Greece

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Summary

The history of the Holocaust is taught in Greek schools from the 6th grade of Primary School to the 3rd grade of Lyceum (Senior High School), in the context of both the subject of History and the subjects of Literature and Religion. Moreover, the Jewish language is taught in Greek University departments.

At the same time, the National Remembrance Day of the Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust is celebrated on or around 27 January, in all schools across Greece.

Conferences and seminars, under the auspices of and funded by the Ministry of Education, are organised in Greece on the teaching of the Holocaust, which are attended by Greek

teachers from all over Greece. Moreover, Greek teachers participate in similar seminars abroad.

Finally, the Greek State supports various cultural events concerning the history and culture of the Jews, in general and Greek Jews, in particular, such as theatrical performances, and encourages teachers and students to participate.

Full Report based on the International Task Force Questionnaire

1. What official directives from government ministries and/or local authorities regarding the teaching of the Holocaust exist in your country? Please attach these directives to your answer.

The Minister of National Education & Religious Affairs, Mrs Marietta Giannakou, given her great sensitivity about racism and xenophobia issues, has taken the following actions in order to promote the teaching of the Holocaust in schools as an extreme manifestation of racism and to raise students' awareness of this issue:

a) On the National Remembrance Day of the Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust (27 January), a special text on the contribution of the Jewish community to economic and social life in Greece, their tragic fate during World War II and the efforts of both Greek officials and the Greek people to protect them is prepared by the Pedagogical Institute and read out in schools across Greece, leading to a discussion in the classrooms. Moreover, various events are held in schools, using the supportive material on the teaching of the Holocaust available in schools across Greece.

b) The MNERA, by its circulars in 2005 and 2006, recommended to all Greek schools to visit the Jewish Museum of Greece, the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki and the Jewish Museum of Rhodes, so that students may participate in their programmes.

c) Books published by the Jewish Museum of Greece have been ordered by the MNERA and distributed to school

libraries, in order to be used by students and teachers as alternative supportive material in teaching.

d) It has been recommended that all Greek teachers participate in seminars organised by the Jewish Museum of Greece, under the auspices of and co-funded by the MNERA, which sent the relevant circulars to Greek schools, in October 2005 and 2006. The MNERA also recommends that teachers should participate in further education seminars on “Racism – Anti-Semitism – Holocaust” for teachers in various prefectures in Greece, in the context of the “Education of Repatriated Greeks and Foreign Students” programme. The first of these seminars was held on 31 March 2006. A relevant conference was, also, organised in the Panteion University in 2005.

e) The Pedagogical Institute encourages research on the Holocaust in primary and secondary schools throughout Greece. An indicative example is the research carried out successfully by Dr Haralambos Kourgiantakis in schools in Corfu.

f) The General Secretariat for Youth funded, in 2006, the monumental publication of the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece “The Holocaust of the Greek Jewry – Monuments and Memories”, which is a rich source of information for teachers and students at both the national and local level. This book was received with enthusiasm by the OSCE member countries, as it has been officially reported to us. The book was also presented officially in the US House of Representatives, by Senator Paul Sarbanes and MP Shelley Berkley, during a ceremony organised by the Embassy of Greece in Washington, and was received favourably.

g) The MNERA sent to all schools in Greece an open invitation to the first seminar for Greek teachers in Yad Vashem. This seminar was held in July 2006 and 18 Greek teachers participated.

h) On the occasion of the National Remembrance Day, 27 January 2006, a pan-Hellenic essay writing competition was conducted under the topic “The Greek Jews and the importance of the remembrance of the Holocaust” and the students who wrote the best five essays were awarded a prize.

2. If the Holocaust is not a mandatory subject, what percentage of schools chooses to teach about the Holocaust?

Textbooks from the 6th grade of Primary School to the 3rd grade of Lyceum contain chapters on the Holocaust. These chapters are included in the MNERA compulsory curriculum and are taught in all schools in Greece without any exception.

3. How is the Holocaust defined?

In textbooks, the Holocaust is defined as the extermination of a large number of people. The Holocaust of the Jews, in particular, is defined as the extermination of the Jews by the Nazi regime using all kinds of methods.

4. Is the Holocaust taught as a subject in its own right, or as part of a broader topic? Explain the reasoning behind this decision.

The Holocaust is not taught as an independent subject in Greek schools. It is taught in the context of the subject of History (chapter concerning World War II, section about crimes against humanity). The history of the Jewish Community in Greece and its tragic fate during World War II is an integral part of the history of the Greek nation and could not be taught as an independent section. It is also taught in the context of the subject of Religion, as well as that of Literature, within the framework of the interthematic / interdisciplinary approach established by the new curriculum. It should be pointed out that, in addition to the importance of the teaching of the Holocaust as a historical event, its teaching in Greek schools serves in imparting a number of values that are necessary if we are to maintain and develop western culture and live in a society of freedom and justice.

5. At what age(s) do young people learn about the Holocaust in schools? Do students encounter the Holocaust in schools more than once?

Greek students are first taught about the Holocaust, the life of the Jews and Jewish religion in the last (6th) grade of primary school, through the History, Language and Religion textbooks.

Education on this matter is completed in the 3rd grade of Lyceum. Specifically, the textbooks that contain material on the Holocaust and the life of Jews in general and the life of the Greek Jews in particular, as well as their religion, are as follows:

- In the History textbook for the 6th grade of Primary School “In Modern and Contemporary Times” (chapter on World War II), there is a reference to the concentration camps and the Jews as a nation targeted by the Nazi for extermination (p. 109). This chapter also includes photographs of Polish Jews being taken to concentration camps.
- In the “Language” textbook for the 6th grade of Primary School (pp. 74-75, section “War and Peace”), there is an excerpt from “Anna Frank’s Diary”. Moreover, on p. 87, it is recommended that students should watch Roberto Benini’s film “Life is beautiful” and that they consult web pages on human rights.
- In the Religion textbook for the 6th grade of Primary School “Religion – Searching for truth in our life” (pp. 104-106), there is an independent chapter on the Jews and their religion.
- In the “History of Ancient Times” for the 1st grade of Junior High School, pp. 19-20, there is a reference to the history of the Jewish nation and its contribution to civilisation. The Jews are described as the first monotheistic nation in human history and a verse is quoted from the Old Testament about how God through Moses helped the Jews escape from the Egyptians.
- In the Religion textbook for the 1st grade of Junior High School (p. 116), there is a reference to the Nazi regime’s effort to exterminate Jews during World War II.
- In the Literature textbook for the 2nd grade of Junior High School, there is a large excerpt from “Anna Frank’s Diary”, as well as a short biographical note of Anna Frank. Moreover, the teacher’s book (p. 36) gives two websites for further information about Anna Frank.
- In the History textbook for the 3rd grade of Junior High School (p. 334), there is reference to the Holocaust and its relation with the ideological origins of racism and Nazism. Pursuant to a ministerial decision, in the academic year 2007-08 a new History textbook for the

- 3rd grade of Junior High School will be introduced, containing a long account of the persecution of the Greek Jews by the Nazi regime and the concentration camps. There are also lots of photographs, many authentic literary texts, personal testimonies and references to relevant books and films.
- The history of the Jews of Thessaloniki and their tragic fate is also taught in the “Local History” textbook for the 3rd grade of Junior High School (pp. 157-160). The said textbook also contains a long account of the history of the Jewish community of Corfu, which can provide a topic for a project. This textbook (also intended to be used by teachers) is accompanied by a CD-ROM containing information and photographs about the Jewish community of Kavala.
 - A CD-ROM for all the grades of Junior High School contains photographs relating to the Jews’ persecution during World War II, a map of the Jewish communities in Greece that were dissolved during the war and three relevant texts.
 - Moreover, the book “European culture and its roots” (optional course) for the 1st grade of Senior High School - Lyceum (pp. 68-70) contains an account of the history of the Jews of Spain.
 - In the History textbook for the 1st grade of Lyceum (pp. 37-41), there is a long reference to the culture of the Jewish nation.
 - In the “Topics of Modern Greek History” textbook for the 3rd grade of Lyceum (p. 48), there is a reference to the contribution of Jews to labour union and the establishment of the first big multinational trade union in Thessaloniki (the Federation).
 - The History textbook for the 3rd grade of Lyceum presents the concentration camps through photographs (pp. 234 and 261) and an excerpt from Poliakov - Wolf’s book “The Third Reich and the Jews” (p. 260). The History examination curriculum was recently revised. Pursuant to Ministerial Decision No. 107348/16.10.2006, as from the academic year 2007-08, the new History textbook for the 3rd grade of Lyceum includes a special section on “War crimes – The Holocaust”, so that students can deepen their knowledge of the Holocaust, assess its consequences for mankind’s collective memory and understand the importance of the

Nuremberg Trials for the international society. This chapter will be a part of the Pan-Hellenic Examinations curriculum.

- In the “Language book for Lyceum – Thematic Cycles”, the text “**The bitter acquaintance with racism**” (pp. 232-235) refers to the Jews and the cruelty of racism they experienced (p. 234, paragraph 6). There is also an analysis of the key issues of the ideological origins of racism and intolerance in European history, in particular during the Third Reich era (pp. 244-247).
- In “The History of the Modern and Contemporary World” for the 2nd grade of Technical Vocational Lyceums (pp. 120, 122), there is a reference to the concentration camps, the extermination of the Jews and the Third Reich’s overall planning for the Jews.
- In the academic year 2006-2007, the “Kallipateira” programme was launched in primary and secondary education, referring, *inter alia*, to the protection of human rights and the principle of equality, and aiming at enhancing children’s awareness of the various aspects of xenophobia and racism.

Underlying the teaching of the Holocaust at all levels from the 6th grade of Primary School to the 3rd grade of Lyceum is the application of a spiral approach to the teaching of a subject at successive levels, which involves gradual amplification and in-depth analysis of the subject.

Furthermore, teaching material about the Holocaust and the history and religion of the Jews is produced by the University of Athens, Intercultural Education Centre in the context of the pilot intercultural programme “Education of Repatriated Greeks and Foreign Students”. This material, which is made available to many Greek schools, includes:

- The book “The History of People” for primary school students contains information about the Jews on pp. 100-105. The corresponding teacher’s book contains information and instructions for teachers on pp. 309-321.
- The book “Religions and Arts” for Junior High School contains information about Judaism on pp. 38-39.
- The book “The Child through the centuries and civilizations” for primary school contains information about

the children under Nazi rule and the Holocaust on pp. 77-79.

- The Wall Multicultural Calendar 2007 marks the religious festivals of five religions: Christianity – Islam – Judaism – Buddhism – Hinduism.
- The “Multicultural Calendar 2006-07” contains information about 47 countries. On pp. 22-23, there are geographical data about Israel and information on Jewish Holidays.
- The CD “Music of the World” includes 16 songs from the Jewish tradition.
- The book “Mythologies of the World” contains a chapter on Canaanite mythology (pp. 280-295).
- The CD “Tales of the world” includes tales from Israel.

Furthermore, the University of Crete, in the context of the programme “Education of Greeks Abroad” has published the book “Roots of History”, which refers to the Greek Jews of Thessaloniki, the Federation and the election of a Jew as a Member of Parliament in Northern Greece in the parliamentary elections of 1st January 1920. This book is sent to schools abroad and is used in the Greek-language education of children of Greeks abroad.

Finally, it should be noted that the Jewish language is taught in the following Greek universities:

- the University of Athens, Departments of a) Social Theology; and b) Theology; and
- the University of Thessaloniki, Departments of a) Theology; and b) Pastoral and Social Theology.

6. How many hours are allocated to teaching and learning about the Holocaust in schools?

The history of the Greek Jews, their religion and the Holocaust are taught in Greek schools at all levels from the 6th grade of Primary School to the 3rd grade of Lyceum, for three to five teaching hours per academic year, in the context of the subjects of History, Literature and Religion.

Moreover, in the context of the subject of Local History for the 3rd grade of Junior High School, teachers can spend ten more teaching hours on organising projects on the history of local

Jewish Communities. For this reason, some characteristic examples are given, such as information on the history of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, Corfu or Kavala.

7. In what areas of study (history, literature, sociology, theology) is the Holocaust taught? In each case, briefly outline the rationale for teaching the Holocaust in this particular subject area.

The Holocaust is taught in Greek schools in the context of the subjects of History, Literature and Religion.

The subject of History refers to the Holocaust as a historical event in the context of World War II and war crimes against humanity. The teaching of the Holocaust in the context of the subject of History is supported by maps, photographs and sources.

In the context of the subject of Literature, texts and photographic material are used to inform students about anti-Semitism before and during World War II. Students are invited to discuss the issue in the classroom.

Finally, in the context of the subject of Religion, there is a thorough discussion of Judaism as a religion, including elements on the history of the Jewish religion, a description of the synagogue (supported by plans), the religious symbols and rites of the Jews and a short description of a boy's religious maturity ceremony, as well as an excerpt from a Hebrew psalm. Moreover, at a higher level, the Nazis' effort to exterminate Judaism during World War II is described.

8. a) What historical, pedagogical and didactic training is provided to teachers of the Holocaust at either the university level or the professional development level in your country?

All the students of the Literature, History and Archaeology Departments and of the Primary Education Pedagogic Departments of Greek Universities are offered historical information about the Holocaust during their studies.

With respect to the further education of students and teachers on teaching approaches to the history of the Holocaust,

seminars and conferences are held by both universities and the MNERA, on the one hand, and other bodies (e.g. the Jewish Museum of Greece) under the auspices of the MNERA, on the other hand.

b) How many teacher-training sessions are held each year, and how many teachers are involved?

The MNERA sets under its auspices and funds seminars organised by the Jewish Museum of Greece, in which about 60 teachers participate – mainly primary school teachers and secondary education teachers of letters. Three seminars have already been held, in 2004, 2005 and 2006.

The MNERA has already co-funded the first seminar for Greek teachers in Yad Vashem. This seminar was held in July 2006 and 18 Greek teachers participated.

The Panteion University organised a Scientific one-day Conference under the topic “60 years since the liberation of Auschwitz” (17 May 2005).

The University of Crete organised in March 2006 a further education seminar entitled “Immigration, Diaspora and Racism” in the context of the programme “Education of Repatriated Greeks and Foreign Students”.

Finally, the MNERA encourages teachers to participate in seminars abroad and covers all the travel expenses to the host country and the participation costs. Specifically, three teachers, seconded to the Ministry of Education, participated in a seminar held in Paris on 14 and 15 December 2004 on “Teaching the Shoah and other sensitive issues in multicultural societies”.

c) What funding is available for training in the teaching of the Holocaust in your country?

The Greek State does not have any annual budgetary appropriations for the further education of teachers in the teaching of the Holocaust in Greek schools. However, seminars and conferences are supported, organised and financed by the MNERA according to the needs that may

arise and the interest expressed by teachers, schools, Jewish Communities or other bodies.

9. Has your country instituted a national Holocaust Memorial Day? If so, in which ways is this day marked and commemorated? What difficulties have you encountered in establishing this day of remembrance in the national consciousness?

In 2004, the Greek Parliament, by a unanimous resolution, designated the 27th of January as “the National Remembrance Day of the Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust”, thus fulfilling a moral obligation of the Greek State towards the innocent victims of Nazi intolerance and racism. Moreover, this will prompt everyone to remain vigilant and defend human rights and ideals, many of which were declared in Greece.

As from October 2005, Greece officially joined the countries that have designated the 27th of January as the National Remembrance Day of the Jewish Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust, by a decision of the UN General Assembly.

On the National Remembrance Day of the Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust (27 January), an official ceremony is organised by state agencies in cooperation with the Jewish Communities in Athens and other cities in Greece. On 27 January 2006, an official ceremony was organised in the Athens Concert Hall by the Prefecture of Athens and the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece, in the presence of the President of the Greek Republic, the Deputy Minister of Education and other representatives of the state and political authorities of Greece. The keynote speaker was Ms Simone Weil. A similar ceremony was held in Thessaloniki by the Prefecture of Thessaloniki and the Jewish Community of the city.

A special text on the history and life of the Greek Jews and the Holocaust is prepared by a Counsellor of History at Pedagogical Institute and read out in all schools across Greece, constituting the basis for discussion in class.

This year (2006), on the occasion of the Remembrance Day, a Pan-Hellenic essay contest was held on “The Greek Jews and the importance of remembering the Holocaust” and the

students that wrote the best five essays received scholarships for Yad Vashem, offered by the Embassy of Israel in Athens, and a monetary prize offered by the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece and the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki.

Finally, the Central Jewish Board of Greece published an album entitled "The Holocaust of the Greek Jewry – Monuments and Memories", which was financed by the General Secretariat for Youth.

The Greek State did not meet with any difficulties in establishing this remembrance day in the conscience of the Greek people, since Greek Christians have coexisted peacefully and creatively with Greek Jews since the Hellenistic Era, they have shared with them all the good and bad times in Greek history and they helped them escape their tragic fate in World War II.

10. Has your country established a national Holocaust memorial and/or museum? What numbers of students visit this memorial/museum each year?

There are three Jewish museums in Greece: the Jewish Museum of Greece in Athens, the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki and the Jewish Museum of Rhodes. Moreover, there are Holocaust Memorials in various cities in Greece where Jewish Communities existed and still exist. These cities are Athens, Alexandroupoli, Arta, Veria, Volos, Didymoticho, Drama, Zante, Thessaloniki, Ioannina, Kavala, Karditsa, Kastoria, Corfu, Komotini, Crete, Kos, Larisa, Nea Orestida, Soufli, Xanthi, Patras, Agrinio, Preveza, Rhodes, Serres, Trikala, Florina and Halkida. Hundreds of students visit every year both the Museums and the Holocaust Memorials (which are centrally located in cities), in order to honour the victims of the Holocaust of the Greek Jews and approach the issues of racism and anti-Semitism.

11. Please estimate the percentage of students in your country who visit authentic sites, and list three primary sources of funding available in your country for visits to authentic sites.

In Greece there are no original Holocaust monuments, since there were no concentration camps. Students of Greek schools can visit the Jewish Museums in Greece, the Holocaust Memorials in 29 cities in Greece, as well as Jewish Synagogues in Greece, which have been restored largely with funds of the Greek State, such as the Jewish Synagogues in Veria and Chania.

12. What are the three major textbooks used in teaching the Holocaust in your country? How many pages do your school textbooks allocate to the Holocaust, and on which aspects do they focus?

The three main textbooks that include information on the Holocaust are:

- The History textbook for the 6th grade of Primary School “Modern Times”, which (in the chapter on World War II) contains information on the concentration camps and the Jews as a nation targeted by the Nazi for extermination (p. 109). This chapter also includes photographs of Polish Jews led to concentration camps. This brief reference to the history of the Holocaust is very important, since it is the first time students are informed about the Holocaust as a historical event. Teaching focuses on helping students understand the concept of the Holocaust and realise the horror of war through a description of the concentration camps.
- The History textbook for the 3rd grade of Junior High School, which discusses the Holocaust and the ideological origins of racism and Nazism on p. 334. Emphasis is given on Nazism’s racist and imperialist ideas and the extermination of the Jews by the SS. Teaching is supported by a CD-ROM for Junior High School, which includes photographs of the Jews’ persecution during World War II, a map of the Jewish communities in Greece that were destroyed and three relevant texts.

Pursuant to a ministerial decision, in the academic year 2007-08 a new History textbook for the 3rd grade of Junior High School will be introduced, containing a long account of the persecution of the Greek Jews by the Nazi regime and the concentration camps. There are

also a lot of photographs, many authentic literary texts, personal testimonies and references to relevant books and films.

- The History textbook for the 3rd grade of Lyceum presents the concentration camps through photographs (pp. 234 and 261) and an extract from Poliakov-Wolf's book "The Third Reich and the Jews" (p. 260) on the horror of Nazism. On p. 234 there is a reference to the financial looting, suppression of freedoms, persecution and extermination of the Jews by Hitler's regime. On p. 261, the Jews' genocide in the concentration camps is described.

Pursuant to ministerial decision No. 107348/16.10.2006, the new History textbook for the 3rd grade of Senior High School (Lyceum), to be introduced in the academic year 2007-08, contains a special section on "War Crimes – The Holocaust", so that students can learn about the Holocaust, assess its consequences for mankind's collective memory and understand the importance of the Nuremberg Trials for the World Society. This chapter will be included in the Pan-Hellenic Examinations curriculum.

13. What strategies of differentiation are typically used to make the study of the Holocaust accessible to students of different ages and with different learning needs?

Greek schools apply a spiral approach to the teaching of a subject-matter at successive levels, which involves gradual amplification and in-depth analysis of the subject. Under this spiral approach, the teaching of the Holocaust in Greece evolves as follows:

- In primary education (Primary School), a brief reference to the Holocaust is made, the meaning of the term is explained, narration becomes tangible through photographs, the human losses during World War II are correlated with the genocide of the Jews and deliberation on the war is stimulated through "Anna Frank's Diary".
- Turning to secondary education, in Junior High School, more textual and fine arts materials are used to inform students about anti-Semitism before and during World War II, as well as the extermination of the Jews in the Nazi camps. Their interest is drawn to the fate of the Greek Jews, and the history of the Greek Jewish

communities is studied in the context of Local History. Finally, general speculation and feelings about the horror of the Holocaust are stimulated.

- At the higher level of secondary education (the Lyceum), there is further deliberation on the importance of the Holocaust in world history, the development of racist ideology and relations between Greek Christians and Greek Jews. Moreover, the importance of peaceful coexistence and solidarity among humans is highlighted.

14. How far and in what ways is your country's own national history integrated into the teaching of the Holocaust?

The Greek Jews' Holocaust is an integral part of Greek history, as it consisted in the persecution and extermination of Greek citizens of Jewish religion by the Nazis during World War II. The Third Reich treated the Greek Jews like millions of other Jews, victims of Nazi racism. It should be pointed out that the Greek authorities such as the Athens Police Chief A. Evert and individuals made a lot of efforts to save as many as possible. In the struggle to protect the persecuted Jews, the Orthodox clergy played a very important role, as Orthodox prelates, such as the Metropolitans of Thessaloniki Gennadius, of Volos Joachim, of Halkida Gregory, of Zakynthos Chrysostomos and, most prominently, the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece Damascenus, protested strongly to the German occupation authorities and by various ways, even by falsifying identity cards and State archives made possible the salvation of many Greek Jews. The Greek Jews have officially expressed their gratitude to their saviours and the State of Israel has awarded to them the honorary title of "Righteous among the Nations". Moreover, the Greek people as a whole recognise and honour the massive participation of their Jewish compatriots in the war of 1940-1941 and in the National Resistance.

15. What are the three major obstacles to teaching and learning about the Holocaust in your country?

The MNERA did not come up against any obstacle in the teaching of the history of the Jewish Community of Greece by teachers or its learning by the students of Greek schools. On the contrary, in many schools research on the Holocaust was

undertaken, on the teachers' initiative, in which students certainly participated.

The MNERA and the Pedagogical Institute, participating actively in the activities of the Education Working Group of the International Task Force, seek to formulate the teaching of the Holocaust according to international scientific standards and teaching experience, so that it will contribute to a better tomorrow for mankind, through peace and cooperation among nations.

ANNEX

MEASURES AND ACTIONS OF THE GREEK STATE FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE TEACHING OF THE HOLOCAUST SINCE THE ELECTION OF GREECE AS A MEMBER OF THE TASK FORCE

1. The MNERA recommended that teachers should participate in teacher training seminars on “Teaching the Holocaust in Greece” in October 2004, 2005 and 2006, organised by the Jewish Museum of Greece under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. The October 2006 seminar was co-financed by the Ministry of Education and the Task Force.
2. The Minister of Education visited Yad Vashem on 15 March 2005 on the occasion of the inauguration of the New Museum.
3. The General Secretariat for Youth issued a press release with the message “Let’s pull down the wall of racism” and a wall was symbolically demolished in Syntagma Square in cooperation with the National Youth Council, during the celebration of the European Week Against Racism (14-21 March 2005).
4. The MNERA, by its circulars in 2005 and 2006, recommended that schools should visit the Jewish Museum and participate in the programmes organised by the Museum.
5. The General Secretary for Youth Ms Vaso Kollia participated in May 2005 in the “March of the Alive” in Auschwitz with a group of 74 Greek Jews and Christians. The General Secretariat for Youth financed this event with €50,000.
6. A ministerial decision to include in the essay writing curriculum the cycle “Fascism – Racism – Anti-Semitism – Holocaust” was issued on 13 May 2005.
7. Recommendation by the Minister of Education to order and include in all school libraries the book “Myrto has grown up”, written by Photini Tomai-Constantopoulou, a novel about the destiny of a Jewish family in Thessaloniki.
8. The Panteion University organised a Scientific one-day Conference under the topic “60 years since the liberation of Auschwitz” (17 May 2005).
9. Three teachers seconded to the Ministry of Education participated in a seminar held in Paris on 14 and 15

December 2004 on “Teaching the Shoah and other sensitive issues in multicultural societies”.

10. Ms Anastasia Kyrkini-Koutoula, Counsellor for History at the Pedagogical Institute and member of the Greek delegation in the International Task Force, participated in a conference held in Lithuania on 12-15 February 2006 in the context of the activities of the International Task Force.

11. Mr Vasileios Ritzaleos, historian seconded at the General State Archives in Drama, participated in the 2nd International Conference held in the War Museum of London, on 11-13 January 2006 in the context of the activities of the International Task Force.

12. A Pan-Hellenic essay writing competition on the Holocaust was organised in November 2005 and the students that wrote the best two essays were awarded scholarships for an educational visit to Israel by the Embassy of Israel in Greece. Three more students were awarded a monetary prize of €500,00 each by the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece and the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki (who paid €500,00 and €1.000,00 respectively). The prizes were awarded in a ceremony held in Athens on 24 May 2006.

13. The General Secretariat for Youth covered the expenses (€50.000,00) for the publication of an album and a CD-ROM under the title “The Holocaust of the Greek Jewry – Monuments and Memories”, which was published by the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece.

14. On the National Remembrance Day of the Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust (27 January 2005 and 2006), a special text on the history and life of the Jews during World War II and the anti-racist message of the Holocaust to mankind, prepared by a Counsellor for History at the Pedagogical Institute, was read out in schools across Greece, constituting the basis for discussion in class.

15. On 30 January 2006, an official event was organised in the Athens Concert Hall by the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece, in the presence of the President of the Greek Republic, on the occasion of the National Remembrance Day of the Holocaust of the Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes. The Deputy Minister of Education attended the event.

16. The Ministry of Education has ordered 1,000 books on the Holocaust, issued by the Jewish Museum of Greece, in order to distribute them to school libraries.

17. A meeting was held in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 28 April 2006 in order to prepare an invitation to experts in the teaching of the Holocaust from renowned foreign institutions, so that they would inform the Pedagogical Institute and representatives of Greek educators on methods of teaching about the Holocaust.
18. The University of Crete organised on 31 March 2006 a seminar entitled "Immigration, Diaspora and Racism" in the context of the programme "Education of Repatriated Greeks and Foreign Students".
19. Dr Anastasia Kyrkini - Koutoula participated in an international conference on "The Holocaust: Memory and Lessons" held in Riga, Latvia on 4-5 July 2006 in the context of the activities of the International Task Force.
20. The MNERA co-funded a seminar organised in Israel by Yad Vashem Museum from 7 to 16 July 2006. 18 teachers from all over Greece participated in the seminar.
21. New textbooks containing material on the Holocaust have been prepared and published.
22. The Sixth Consultation Between Judaism and Orthodoxy – "Religious Liberty and the Relationship Between Freedom and Religion" will be held in Thessaloniki. The consultation will be organised by the Ecumenical Patriarchate – Office of Interreligious and Intercultural Relations in Brussels – and the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations in New York, and the General Secretariat for Youth will support it financially.

EVENTS AIMED AT STRENGTHENING CULTURAL RELATIONS

1. The 3rd Annual Meeting of Greek and Israeli Authors, under the auspices of the National Book Centre and the Israeli Embassy in Athens, was held in Volos and was attended by 17 Greek and 10 Israeli authors.
2. The book "Jewish Poets in the Middle Ages" by Joseph Ventouras was published by Nefeli Publications in 2005.
3. The National Theatre presents for the second consecutive year in Athens the play "Dybouk" by Bruce Myers, based on Salom Anski's work, inspired by the Jewish tradition.

For further information you can contact:

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